

LITURGICAL LANGUAGES IN TODAY'S ORTHODOX TRADITION

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Abstract. The Christian tradition from the first days of its existence used the living word of the gospel. From the event of Pentecost, when the word of faith sounded in the ears of the listeners in their own language, the Church established an important principle: the Heavenly Father gave the apostles of Christ the gift of speaking in different languages, but did not give the multi-lingual pilgrims in Jerusalem the gift of understanding Hebrew. During the 2,000-year history of the Church, Christ's teaching was spread in the language of the respective peoples. But parallel to this, a tendency to use in worship old languages considered "holy" was later noticed. While the truth is that what is sacred is the content of Christian preaching and worship, not the language in which it is offered. To this day, this practice of neglecting the understandable language of the people is observed in some of the local Orthodox churches. And this seriously complicates the work of the Christian mission.

Keywords: Holy Scriptures, Orthodox Church, Orthodox tradition, liturgical texts, liturgical language, three sacred languages, translations, mission.

The concept of liturgical language in the Orthodox tradition is not uniform and the use of at least two languages in the same service is often observed. That is why the plural number is used in the header of this text. But let's start in order.

All humans, as rational creatures of God, use language as a means of communication with each other, and also with God, to whom we turn in our prayers in our native language or in another human language used by us. For our sake and for our salvation, the Son of God became a man and communicated with people in their language in order to convey to them His divine teaching and saving commands. His apostles also preached and wrote their books, preserved in the collection of the New Testament, in the languages they knew and in which they had to communicate with the people of different nationalities, catechized by them.

In the mind that knows Christian theology, the experience of human intellectual efforts and the divine revelation are firmly united in the intelligible world of the tradition of Orthodox reflection. Along the path of Christianity in history, the ancient classical languages have been extremely important – not only as sacred languages of Christian worship, but also, far more, as forms of actual